



Roundtable on the Crown of the Continent
Connecting People to Shape the Future

3rd ANNUAL CONFERENCE
September 27-28, 2012
Fernie Mountain Lodge – Fernie, British Columbia



Preface

The 3rd Annual Conference of the Roundtable on the Crown of the Continent, titled “Pathways to Prosperity: Caring for Communities in the Crown of the Continent” was held in Fernie, British Columbia on September 27-28, 2012. The two-day gathering attracted approximately 125 people to Fernie Mountain Lodge to connect people working in different places and sectors throughout the 18 million acre region and in some cases beyond.

The purpose of the Roundtable is to connect people to sustain and enhance *culture*, *community*, and *conservation* in the Crown of the Continent. The annual conference serves as one of the primary vehicles to achieve this purpose. The first conference (2010) focused largely on conservation initiatives, while the second conference (2011) focused on the cultural fabric within the region. The organizing theme for the 3rd annual conference is “caring for communities” in the face of change. The objectives for the conference include:

1. Build relationships, exchange information, and foster a sense of regional identity;
2. Foster understanding of key economic trends and drivers shaping communities in the Crown of the Continent – including cities and towns as well as watersheds and working lands; and
3. Explore how the Roundtable’s adaptive management initiative is responding to community needs and interests.

The purpose of this summary report is to amplify key conference themes and ideas around the theme of sustaining and enhancing culture, community and conservation . Two complimentary documents serve to pathways to provide the underlying detail for this report, they are the *Pathways to Prosperity* Report prepared by National Parks Conservation Association (Hagermeir, 2011) and the 2012 Conference Evaluation Report. These documents capture the depth of knowledge shared and generated during the plenary sessions, small group workshops, and may be reviewed on the Roundtable website. www.crownroundtable.org .

This document was prepared with several audiences in mind – the diverse array of supporting co-sponsors who made this conference possible, the exceptional speakers and facilitators, the dedicated participants, and those who did not attend but have the desire to know what happened.

The conference agenda and the Roundtable, itself, is guided by the Leadership Team – individuals from all quadrants of the Crown of the Continent who help determine how to keep the Roundtable effective as a connector amidst all the individuals and groups working in the region. This year’s Leadership Team includes:

- Clayton Matt, Culture Co-chair, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes
- Mary Sexton, Community Co-chair, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
- Stephen Legault, Conservation Co-chair, Crown of the Continent Conservation Initiative
- Dylan Boyle, Crown of the Continent Geotourism Council

- Ian Dyson, Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development and Crown Managers Partnership
- Dorothy First Rider, Blood Tribe
- Lisa Flowers, Crown of the Continent Ecosystem Education Consortium
- Dave Hillary, East Kootenay Conservation Program
- Alan Rollo, Sun and Teton River Watershed Groups
- Tom Schmidt, USDA Forest Service, Region 1
- Erin Sexton, The University of Montana and Crown Managers Partnership
- Carole Stark, Water Matters
- Gary Tabor, Co-Director, Roundtable
- Matt McKinney, Co-Director, Roundtable

Finally, a special thank you is extended to the individuals listed below. Individually and as a team they compiled and edited the conference notes which will serve as a documentary record of this significant event in perpetuity. Many of these individuals are students who are interested in learning more about the on-the-ground work and related natural resource issues in the Crown and made the time to serve this effort in a volunteer capacity. Their involvement reflects the Roundtable's commitment to train future leaders. Through authentic educational engagement and direct contact with today's leaders these students hopefully gain valuable exposure to the wide cross-section and diverse social, political, economic and ecological domains when working to integrate culture, community and conservation in the 21st century.

- Sarah Velk, University of Montana
- Kascie Herron, University of Montana
- Stephan Edwards, Center for Natural Resources and Environmental Policy
- Matt Herron, University of Montana
- Hudson Spivey, University of Montana
- Anna Semple, University of Montana

This conference is fast becoming a signature event within the Crown of the Continent, and people consistently praise the staff of the Roundtable for its ability to create an inclusive, informed, and deliberative setting connecting people in a shared landscape. As Mary Harding from Banff stated this year, "Most conference you go to, everyone in the group is the same. The thing I love about the Roundtable is that everyone is different – academics, ranchers, young people, NGOs, First Nations – and I have an opportunity to talk with all of them."

Introduction

The Roundtable on the Crown of the Continent is an ongoing forum to bring together people who care about this special place. It is based on the observation that the future of the region is being shaped by over 100 government agencies, non-government organizations, and community-based partnerships. Through workshops, an annual conference, and collaborative projects, the Roundtable embraces the 18 million acre region; is open to all perspectives, interests, and communities; focuses on connecting people, facilitating communication, and catalyzing action; supplements other related activities and initiatives; and promotes sustainable communities and landscapes.

The Roundtable is not any particular group of people, a government commission, or a new organization. It is a network of existing networks, and is co-convened by the University of Montana's Center for Natural Resources & Environmental Policy and the Center for Large Landscape Conservation.

Indigenous cultures – Tribes, Bands and First Nations – have inhabited the vast landscape of the Crown for thousands of years. It is one of the last places in North America that still hosts all of its native large predators – a sign of a remarkable intact landscape. The 18 million acre ecosystem contains the headwaters of three major water systems; habitat for a diverse array and significant number of native flora and fauna; and a natural landscape of breathtaking vistas, wildness, solitude, and big broad skies that inspires a perpetual connection between people and nature.

The 2012 Conference

The three annual conferences of the Roundtable on the Crown of the Continent have explored the integration of culture, community and conservation. The 1st conference, held in Waterton, Alberta, focused on creating a common regional identity and explored the many conservation efforts around the Crown of the Continent. The 2nd annual conference, hosted by the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes in Polson, Montana focused on the cultural lens and how native knowledge and heritage inform local and regional decisions.

The 3rd Annual Conference, held amidst the high peaks of Fernie, British Columbia, explored the pathways to community prosperity and examined how we “care for communities” in the face of change. The conference aimed to foster understanding of key economic trends and drivers shaping communities in the Crown of the continent, including both cities and towns as well as watersheds and working lands.

Welcome

Amidst the stunning, yellow-tinged high peaks and clear, smoke-free skies, local leaders Dave Hillary from the East Kootenay Conservation Program, Jukke Gyorki of Tourism Fernie, and Dan Gravelle of the Ktunaxa First Nation welcomed us to their landscape.



Memorial to Ted Smith

Gary Tabor led a tribute to visionary conservationist and Crown of the Continent ambassador Ted Smith, who lost his life in a hiking accident this summer. John Nordgren of the Kresge Foundation and Jim Levitt of Harvard University added their thoughts about how Ted's leadership helped found the field we are all engaged in – protecting and managing land across boundaries and landscapes.

Ted understood that people make a difference in this landscape – that we all make a great difference. He cared about mentoring young people and pushed and inspired many of the people in the Crown of the Continent.

Today's Economic Engine: Large Landscapes

Mary Sexton moderated a panel of experts who discussed the economic and demographic trends in the Crown, highlighted the economic value of large landscapes and “made the business case” for sustaining and enhancing culture, community and conservation.

Todd Gartner of the TheWorld Resources Institute and Andrew Hagemeyer, National Parks Conservation Association gave some creative examples for funding conservation efforts, building and attracting local business, and enhancing a society to match the scenery.

Questions and comments centered on how to reconcile attracting people and business with the impacts on the landscape that may be created. Panelists discussed how those businesses that

choose to be here because of location may use their capital to protect those resources. Land-use planning, early and proactively, can also prepare a community for business growth.

Others questioned whether the economic bottom-line was the essential element in this nexus of environment and economy or self-identity with the landscape. Panelists discussed how both was important on different scales: regional job creation and community prosperity, parcel-level making ends meet and personal relationships to the landscapes.

Perspectives on Community and Economy – Public and Private Sector Leaders

Dylan Boyle, of the Crown of the Continent Geotourism Council, moderated a panel of community leaders from around the region who discussed how they are adapting to economic, environmental, and demographic changes while working to sustain and enhance their communities. Panel members included Brian Gallant, a councilor from Crowsnest Pass; Jikke Gyorki from Tourism Fernie; Addrien Marx from the Seeley Lake Community Foundation, Tracy McIntyre of Eureka Economic Development Partnership; Bev Thornton of Alberta SouthWest Regional Development, and Keith Powell of Kootenay Business Magazine.



Participants discussed how they faced an alternative – destroying or enhancing their communities when faced with growing populations and resource use. To enhance community, organizations initiated sporting events, increased tourist visitation, made the transition from logging to restoration, and used the profits from business to improve community resources.

Comments from the audience reinforced geotourism and the need to celebrate local food and culture. We learned how the outdoors is celebrated not only in tourism, but also in educational curriculum (Seeley Lake). Some participants stressed the need to balance economic development with wildlands protectons.

Perspectives on Community and Economy – Emerging Leaders

This third panel, moderated by Shawn Johnson of the Center for Natural Resources and Environmental Policy, explored how emerging leaders are handling the challenges and strategies for building resilient communities throughout the region.

Challenges and opportunities for different speakers' communities included:

- Want people to think more long term, and we can start having the conversation.
- How do we stay and maintain our business/lives?
- Managing cycles of business is the challenge-long-term in oil and gas is not really possible
- Lack of confidence among First Nations people, dependence on government, generational gap, people don't feel capable, school is not always the answer
- Need help with small businesses, need a support net to encourage/empower First Nations peoples
- Intergenerational trauma, ignorance to historical relationships between First Nations and Canadians, leads to a lack of a support system. Elders are still a key resource
- By restoring culture we can get ourselves out of the bad situation –must know where we've come from to know where we can go.
- Best way to govern a group is to do it together-leadership isn't making the choice, it's helping people make choices together
- What is the point of economic development if it's not benefitting everyone-have to consider this when planning economic development
- Remember that there were people here much longer than Europeans,
- Average person lives day to day-don't consider the future
- Water is going to be the biggest challenge
- Business here is linked to the land-must exercise self-restraint
- Have to ask ourselves, what is our legacy to our children? Bank account or a clean river
- Finding ways to connect kids to outside

What do we want to pass on?

- Still have to try to empower all young people that they can effect change
- The value of discourse – especially with elders/older people, intergenerational and intercultural
- Business is intellect, not something you can touch
- Involve even younger kids-high school

Field Trip: Morrissey Cottonwoods and Lizard Creek



After loading up into two large white Teck motor coaches, dozens of conference participants traveled 12 miles south of the Best Western to Morrissey and the Ancient Cottonwood Interpretive Trail. Here, the group met with Dave Hillary of the East Kootenay Conservation Program and Nancy Newhouse from Nature Conservancy Canada, who shared stories of land conservation projects and their importance in the Elk Valley.

Nancy and Dave described how Nature Conservancy Canada (NCC) has partnered with industry (Shell, Tembec, Teck) to protect critical lands in the area. Acquiring large land parcels makes the management process easier, and in the Crown, NCC has discovered that they have to work at a large landscape scale to be effective. The Conservancy strives to find a balance among conservation, community, and economy – so many of its land projects are multiple use with multiple zoning. Maintaining positive relationships with local communities often happens through the engagement of businesses and employers in those communities.



The second stop on the field trip was at a site on Lizard Creek, a tributary to the Elk River. Here, participants met with representatives from the Elk River Alliance who discussed the organization's Streamkeepers monitoring program. They demonstrated macroinvertebrate sampling techniques, showcased various organisms found in the creek, and explained what these indicator species tell us about the health of the watershed.

Crown Café

Friday's sessions began with announcements by participants of what they are doing around the region – in sound bites of 60 seconds or less. They included the following range of activities related to culture, community and conservation:

- Rotary Club's International Peace Park group continues to meet each year in a Hands Across the Border event and pledge peace between the two nations.
- Wildsight and Headwaters are working on efforts to expand Waterton Park. Their latest effort was a Banquet on the Border
- The Seeley Lake Land Use Plan has resulted in a Nordic trail system, where regional and national competitions can be held.
- There have been efforts to get the Sweet Grass Hills area to be another boundary protected area.
- A wide variety of stakeholders would like to get the Castle Special Place area protected.
- Alpine Artisans demonstrates the power of art and the link between art and conservation.

- Alberta Parks sponsored Ecotone, placing artists on ranches.
- David Craig, a University of Montana PhD student has published an article about the Blackfeet Nation and its relationship to Glacier National Park in Conservation and Society.
- Glacier Institute needs “friends” to win solar panels for its facilities.
- Crown of the Continent Geotourism Council is implementing a leadership program to help business become more sustainable.
- North Fork Preservation Association is working on weed, wolves, and wilderness programs.
- Fernie is developing an extensive Trails Project.
- Art is aiding the cause for Stop Castle Logging and Red Alert Castle (see webistes).
- Swan View Coalition has developed a website to link people with culture and conservation using geotourism education and offering hikes.
- The Biosphere Reserve is balancing sustainable use and conservation in the Waterton area. They have developed a carnivore co-existence program.
- Miistakis has published a Highway 3 wildlife connectivity report and developed other road ecology tools.
- The Lincoln Institute is working with University of Montana to build a website that looks at university program building conservation on the ground.
- The University of Montana is developing a Legal Atlas – collecting land use laws from around the world to set best practices.
- Endless Sky is creating a food manufacturing facility.
- The Great Smoky Mountains offer a contrast and warning to the Crown Parks.
- The Columbia Basin Trust has developed a program called “Communities Adapting to Climate Change.”
- The Mayor of Waterton gave an update on the defunding of Waterton Park.
- The Crown Manager’s Partnership is meeting in Cranbrook on March 5-7, 2013.

Hot Topics in the Crown of the Continent

Forest Resources

Michael Jamison moderated a discussion about some of the most important forestry themes and issues in the Crown – a big topic in a very small room. Case studies were presented by Chip Weber and Anne Dahl (Southwest Crown of the Continent), Nancy Newhouse (Elk Valley Project), Lee-Anne Walker (Elk River Alliance), and Sarah Elmiligi (Castel Mountains).



Presenters discussed the “arranged marriage” between loggers and conservationists and how the marriage was holding together so far. Involving elementary school kids in project work helps cement the “family.” Expanding partnerships to local administrations, faith communities, and others is key. Collaboration brings better results. Projects are producing lots of results—restoration, invasive species reduction, trail improvements. The challenge is whether expanding work and expending resources in one area detracts from other forests in the region. Another challenge is the need to limit inclusiveness in collaboration and the risk of becoming an “insider game.” In Alberta, there have been challenges of involving the government in projects. Funding is a challenge and so is the need to keep science from being manipulated. Most of the funding available is for restoration, not protecting or maintaining forest landscapes that are in good shape. Monitoring and evaluation may change the course of collaboration; the process needs to be responsive. Keys to success: Food, fun, and fieldtrips – don’t underestimate the power in these activities

Water Resources

Case studies were shared by Chris Tweeten of Montana Reserved Water Rights Commission; Gerald Lunack of the Blackfoot Tribe; Steve Lozar of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribe; Dorothy First Rider of the Blood Tribe; and , Dan Gravelle of the Ktunaxa Nation. Matt

McKinney of the Center for Natural Resources and Environmental Policy moderated a discussion about:

- How is water used? What happens with shortages/floods?
- How do tribes/first nations secure water for agriculture, personal use, etc?
- What legality is there in regards to water rights?

Participants made the following points:

- The Crown of the Continent has 20+ major watersheds
- Western water law is an outgrowth of mining and agriculture
- Historically, first come first serve regarding water rights
- Historically, tribal water rights took seniority over others
- Tribes assert their rights to use water, litigation ensues
- States can also sue each other over water issues
- Translating water issue specifics to the average tribal person for voting purposes is a challenge
- Around 2001, Blackfeet broke off from water negotiations
- People's opinions and positions change, which is problematic
- "Formed in water in the womb" – Kootenay are people of the water
- Water needs to be shared
- 1855 Treaty – very important for Native water rights
- Blood Tribe also sign into 1855 Treaty
- 1991 – Alberta Water Rights Act: Alberta owns all water, did not consult First Nations
- Terminology in Acts did not allow for any progress with negotiations
- Blood Tribe is trying to enter into an MOU about water management
- Within the new treaty between the tribes and Canadian government, the existing water licenses will continue and allow for negotiating of additional water licenses. However, instead of being under the jurisdiction of the federal government, the tribes will be dealing with British Columbia.



The group discussed community/tribal outreach, water quality and health issues related to the Tar Sands, public participation in the process, strategic engagement, funding, the role of science, and the advantages of a negotiation approach.

Energy Resources

Steph Legault moderated a discussion with Ryland Nelson of Wildsight, who discussed energy issues in the Flathead Wild Campaign; Lea Whitford and Terry Tatsey from Blackfeet Community College who discussed oil and gas development along the Rocky Mountain Front; Lou Bruno of the Glacier-Two Medicine Alliance; and Erin Sexton of the University of Montana who gave details about the Flathead MOU Initiative.

Building the Regional Neighborhood

Gary Tabor, Center for Large Landscape Conservation, facilitated a panel discussion highlighting how the Roundtable's adaptive management initiative is supporting ongoing efforts to foster economic and community prosperity while promoting cultural and conservation values at the same time. Gary discussed the difficulty of directly addressing the disease, rather than the symptoms of that disease. "Land doctors" Mike Durglo of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes; Erin Sexton of the Crown Managers Partnership; Allan Rollo of the Sun River Watershed Group; Carole Stark of the Oldman River Watershed Group and Water Matters; Anne Dahl of the Working Lands Council; Dave Hillary of the East Kootenay Conservation Program; Anne Carlson of the Southwest Crown of the Continent; and Lea Whitford of the Blackfeet Community College shared information about their projects and how throughout the region, all these projects are leading to community, conservation and cultural adaptation and resilience.

CONFERENCE CO-SPONSORS

Without co-sponsors, this conference would not have happened. The generosity of co-sponsors and the on-location advice of Dave Hillary, Ryland Nelson, Casey Brennen, and the Chamber of Commerce were helpful guides for planning the conference and entertainment.

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